

ODP 9-1559
25 October 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Comptroller

ATTENTION:

STATINTL

FROM: Bruce T. Johnson
Director of Data Processing

SUBJECT: Proposal by RMS/IRO to Include Funds for a
Community-wide Bibliographic System in the
FY-81 Budget

1. ODP strongly recommends that the issue paper on the subject of 1981 funding for a Community-wide bibliographic and document retrieval system be withdrawn. The proposal to fund a system in 1981 is premature and it should not even be raised as an issue at this time. If for political reasons it must be presented, then Alternative 4, to defer all action pending further study, is the only practical alternative for the Community to adopt.

2. In January 1979, in collaboration with the Office of Central Reference, ODP submitted to the NFIB IHC a proposal that the Community study the "feasibility and desirability of adopting CIA's RECON bibliographic index and ADSTAR micro-graphic document storage and retrieval system as a Centralized Intelligence Community Bibliographic and Document Retrieval System, managed and operated for the Community by CIA." The Committee accepted the proposal and authorized the Chairman, [redacted] to undertake a study of the proposal. That study has not been completed, although a preliminary statement of conclusions has been produced, and the IHC has had no opportunity to either study or evaluate its conclusions. These facts alone are sufficient reason for deferring budgetary decisions on the adoption of such a centralized indexing and retrieval system.

3. In its proposal, CIA included preliminary cost figures which were admittedly rough and subject to refinement once the Community had decided exactly what kind of centralized services it required. The CIA proposal also made clear that there were no resources in the CIA program to support an enhancement of its bibliographic and document retrieval system and the proposal stated "the resources

required to expand and upgrade the existing system to serve the needs of other Community agencies should be provided by those agencies." The issue paper presented by the IRO substitutes for CIA's rough figures as yet unevaluated costs developed by the contractor which has been conducting the IHC study. We continue to believe that the costing of the proposal should be carefully developed after the Community has made its substantive decisions on what kind of services it requires.

4. In its proposal CIA assumed, we believe realistically, that Community use of RECON and ADSTAR would entail significant expansion of those systems and our rough estimates of possible costs attempted to anticipate the cost of that expansion. No such sense of future expansion is reflected in the costs presented in the issue paper which apparently assumes a static relationship between the system and the expanded customer population which it will be expected to serve. Additionally, the costs outlined in Alternative 1 do not include any reference to the cost associated with the personnel needed to operate a Community system of this kind.

5. The money amounts cited in Alternative 1 are not inconsistent with our previous estimates. The estimate of floor space is inadequate. If space were available as an extension of existing CIA computer facilities, approximately 1,500 sq. ft. would be required. For a stand-alone center to serve the needs of the Community, our original estimate of 2,500 sq. ft. of floor space remains valid. The COINS costs are shown as one-time costs, but there are recurring costs associated with the maintenance of a COINS interface. They appear to be missing.

6. Alternatives 2 and 3 are presented in such skeletal form as to defy analysis. Regarding number 3, we do not see how SAFE, designed to serve carefully defined information handling problems of CIA and DIA analysts, can be easily transformed into a Community bibliographic and document retrieval system. A proposal to change the architecture of SAFE on the basis of so little analysis strikes us as highly dangerous and potentially very expensive.

7. Alternative 4, as we have indicated before, is the only one of the four alternatives presented which we find acceptable.

8. The issue paper tends to draw its support for early action from the IHC "Report of the Analysts Support Task Force" which indeed concluded that "a standard online bibliographic

reference system for all intelligence source materials" should be developed. By the definition of RECON included in the preliminary report of the contractors studying the CIA proposal, RECON as it presently exists does not qualify as a "reference system for all intelligence source materials." The CIA proposal which anticipates expansion of RECON in the direction of greater comprehensiveness would come closer to satisfying the recommendations in the Analysts Support report, but an expanded RECON cannot be delivered within the costs proposed in the IRO issue paper.

9. ODP was prepared to play its part in providing a Community bibliographic service when it forwarded to the INC the original proposal regarding development of a Community Bibliographic and Document Retrieval System. Nothing has happened to cause us to revise that commitment. However, we strongly believe that the orderly process begun early in 1979 should be allowed to run its course, that the results of the as yet incomplete study should be presented to the Information Handling Committee, and that the results of the Committee's deliberations should be used as the basis for the presentation of budgetary proposals in the upcoming Program cycle leading to the development of the 1982 NFIP budget.


/s/ Bruce T. Johnson

Bruce T. Johnson

cc: DDA
D/OCR

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